

## **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

### **Friends of Villa Terrace Gala in the Garden fundraiser set for Saturday July 23, 2022**

“A Night of Wine & Roses” Gala raises funds for the Villa Terrace Renaissance Garden.

**Milwaukee, WI (June 2022)** – An unforgettable evening of dining and dancing in the Renaissance-style garden overlooking Lake Michigan is planned for the 2022 Friends of Villa Terrace Gala in the Garden to be held on July 23.

The event features a fabulous wine tasting with Waterford Wines, a delightful seated dinner by Shully’s, a silent auction and live auction, and live music by Mark Davis and The Eddie Butts Band. The Master of Ceremonies for the event will be Kyle Cherek, former host of Wisconsin Foodie.

The Friends of Villa Terrace host this event biennially as the major fundraiser for the maintenance and care of the Renaissance Garden at Villa Terrace.

This year, a special focus will be the restoration of the distinctive Hermes sculpture that graces the cloistered entryway gardens. This sculpture is a true hidden gem, comprised of 1<sup>st</sup> c. Roman torso and 17<sup>th</sup> c. Italian additions, attributed to the famed sculptor, Gian Lorenzo Bernini.

This year’s Gala in the Garden theme is inspired by the beautiful roses within the Villa Terrace gardens as well as the wine tasting that will feature premium and rare vintages during the cocktail hour.

“I can’t tell you how many people have said they truly love Villa Terrace and its splendid Renaissance Garden. Many couples have fond memories of their wedding held in such a gorgeous location. Our event will raise funds to allow the garden to continue to enchant visitors, and to conserve the Hermes sculpture for the enjoyment of future generations,” said Megan Holbrook, Friends of Villa Terrace Board President and Gala Co-Chair.

The house was designed by internationally renowned, Milwaukee-born architect David Adler in 1924 for A.O. Smith president Lloyd Smith. The original garden was designed by Rose Standish Nichols in collaboration with the architect to recreate a 16<sup>th</sup> century Tuscan landscape.

In 1997, the Friends of Villa Terrace began a multi-million dollar restoration, working with landscape architect Dennis Buettner to bring back the garden, with a focus on classical elements of the original plans.

Key features of Villa Terrace gardens include the “scalleta d’aqua,” a “water stairway” that travels down three terraces to a grove of crab apple trees and a “vasca” – a fish pond. Two “secret gardens,” a thicket, dwarf fruit trees and classical statuary are other elements of the garden. The wrought iron Demmer-Neptune gate, bordering Lincoln Memorial Drive, was envisioned by master iron worker Cyril Colnik, who designed ironwork for Villa Terrace.

The Friends of Villa Terrace have contributed substantially over the years to sustain this significant public garden overlooking Lake Michigan. As in many years, the A.O. Smith

Corporation is the proud Gala presenting sponsor. This year's Gala Co-Chairs are Megan Holbrook and Eric Vogel and Jola and Doug W. Rose. The Honorary Chairs are Mary Emory, Margarete Harvey, and Emily Robertson. The Honorees for the event are Shelly & JD Culea, Susan Strecker, and the Garden Committee, who have all contributed with loving care to the preservation of the garden.

Today, the garden and grounds host a variety of events serving thousands of visitors, including children's educational activities, theater presentations and garden lectures.

The Charles Allis Villa Terrace umbrella organization recently named Jaymee Harvey Willms as the incoming Executive Director. "Walking through the Villa Terrace gardens you can see the love, time and devotion of the Friends of Villa Terrace. Their hard work is largely supported by the Gala. As we look to preserve our collective history and bring the Villa to the next generation of art, plant and history lovers, the Gala is an incredible way to be involved. Join us at the Gala! I promise, it is not one to miss!" said Jaymee Harvey Willms.

### **Details:**

**What:** "A Night of Wine & Roses" the biennial Gala in the Garden event held by the Friends of Villa Terrace

**When:** July 23, 2022 5:30 to 11:00 pm

**Where:** Villa Terrace, 2220 N. Terrace Ave. Milwaukee, WI 53202

**Tickets:** \$400 per person; (a portion of which is tax deductible). Tickets and sponsorships can be purchased online at [www.galainthegarden.com](http://www.galainthegarden.com)

**Information:** Please visit [www.galainthegarden.com](http://www.galainthegarden.com)

### **Fast facts about Villa Terrace:**

- The distinctive Hermes sculpture that graces the cloistered entryway gardens is a focus of this year's fundraising efforts for conservation. This sculpture is a true hidden gem, comprised of 1<sup>st</sup> c. Roman torso and 17<sup>th</sup> c. Italian additions, attributed to the famed sculptor, Gian Lorenzo Bernini. Years of weathering and its interior iron rods that are decaying are causing the sculpture to slowly degrade. The sculpture of Hermes was purchased in Italy over a hundred years ago by a private New York collector and then loaned to Williams College from 1920-1966. The Milwaukee Art Center Garden Club purchased the statue from the collector for \$10,000 and commissioned a local sculptor, Dick Wiken, to create the decorative bronze pedestal and fountain for Hermes. This sculpture by the premier Italian sculptor and architect of the 17th century is perfectly situated at Villa Terrace, which was designed as a Mediterranean villa.
- Designed in the Tuscan style, Villa Terrace was inspired by Villa Cicogna, built in the 1560s, in Lombardy, Italy.
- Landscape designer Rose Standish Nichols, a descendant of early American colonist Miles Standish, designed the original Villa Terrace Renaissance Gardens in collaboration

with the architect David Adler. She called the Italian gardens “a joy to the eye and a balm to the soul.”

- Cyril Colnik created ironwork for a German pavilion at the Chicago World’s Fair in 1893. Visitors can see his prize-winning fair piece in the permanent Colnik Gallery at Villa Terrace.
- Lloyd Smith’s widow donated Villa Terrace to Milwaukee County.

**Contacts:** Visit [www.GalaintheGarden.com](http://www.GalaintheGarden.com) for more information. Questions about the gala and other ways to support Villa Terrace can be directed to Megan Holbrook 414-248-6777 or [meganwh@gmail.com](mailto:meganwh@gmail.com), or Laura Emory 414-520-6414 or [Laura@Emory-Consulting.com](http://Laura@Emory-Consulting.com).